

MARRIAGE

There were 7,263 marriages solemnized in Montana in 2007 and the rate per 1,000 population, 7.6, was a slight increase over the previous year's rate. However, the trends in marriage rates for both Montana and the United States have been in long-term decline since 1980 (see **Figure 58** below).

Figure 58

MARRIAGE RATES MONTANA AND THE UNITED STATES, 1972-2007

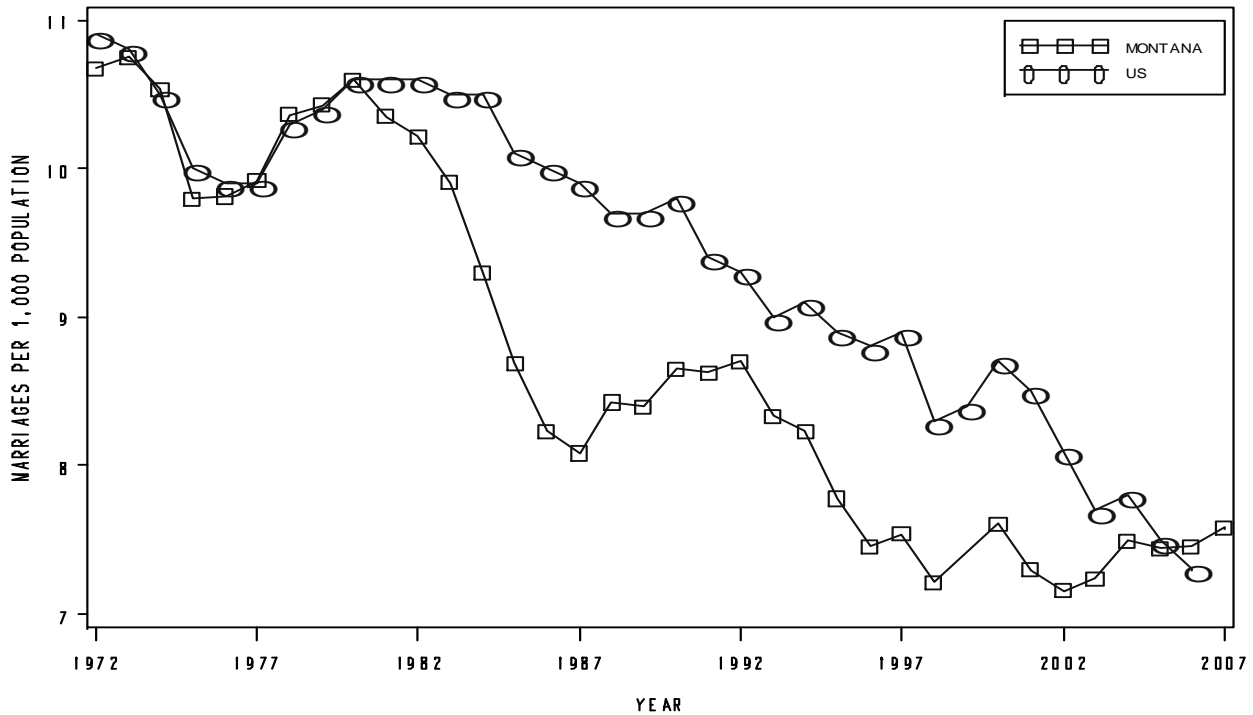


Table S-5 shows the number of marriages solemnized by the county where those marriages were performed. This table also shows the number of licenses issued, by county, for all marriages solemnized in Montana.

Table M-1 shows the frequency of marriage by month in the year 2007. The summer and early fall months (June through September) have been the most popular times for marriage.

The ages of brides and grooms, by age groups and prior marital status, are shown in **Table M-2**. Two-thirds of the brides (65.4%) and grooms (66.6%) married for the first time in 2007.

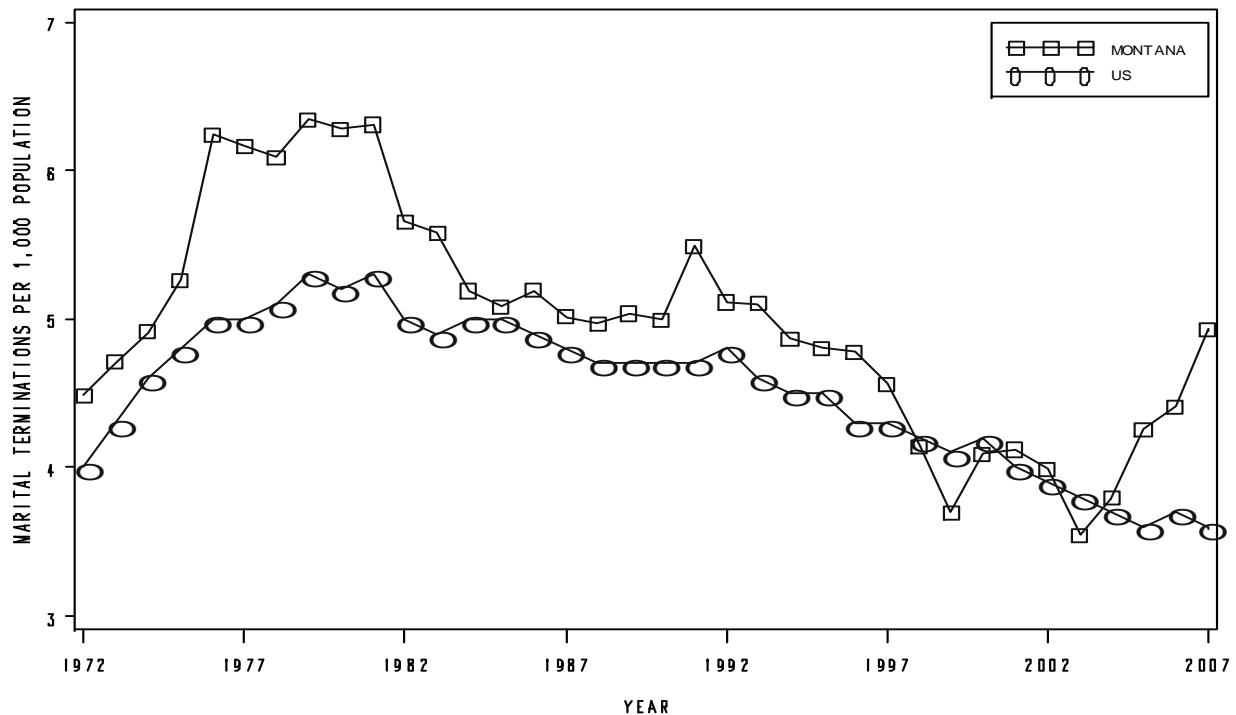
Just over half (55.4 %) of all marriages performed in Montana in 2007 were first marriages for both the bride and the groom. The frequency of such marriages is shown in **Table M-3** by age group of bride and groom. Median ages of brides and grooms are shown in **Table M-4**. The median age for first-time brides in 2007 was 26 years and that of first-time grooms was 25.

MARITAL TERMINATION

In October of 1998, the Judicial Case Management System (JCMS) assumed responsibility for the collection of marital termination records (marital dissolutions and invalid marriages). The records from 1998 through 2007 are not strictly comparable to those collected by the Office of Vital Statistics (OVS) in prior years. However, **Figure 59** shows that the trend in marital termination for Montana was roughly parallel to the national trend from 1972 through 1997, years in which data were collected by OVS, although the Montana rates were consistently higher in this period. In the years after 1997, when JCMS has been collecting marital termination data, the Montana rate rates have displayed no consistent relationship.

Figure 59

MARITAL TERMINATION RATES



MONTANA AND THE UNITED STATES, 1972-2007*

* Montana data were collected by the Montana Office of Vital Statistics (OVS) through September 1998 and by the Judicial Case Management System (JCMS) thereafter. Data collected by JCMS are not comparable to those collected by OVS and should be used with caution. Data for the United States in 2007 are provisional.

Montana's frequency and rate of marital termination per 1,000 population is shown in **Table S-5**. During the last 20 years that OVS collected the data, this rate decreased from a high of 6.5 in 1979 to 4.6 in 1997. During the period of data collection by JCMS, the rate reached its maximum of 5.0 in 2007. As stated above, marital termination records collected after 1997—and rates calculated from those records—are not strictly comparable to those collected before that time.